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THE NATIONAL *Voter*

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE U. S.

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Critics Eye Mutual Security Program

THE President launched his proposals for next year's Mutual Security Program on March 6th in the face of very heavy winds. In an election year, with taxes at an all-time high, every member of Congress is conscious of demands for economy. Where is it better to make cuts, we hear many say, than in funds for foreign aid which "does not benefit constituents?" Both in and out of Congress there are those who believe that the Program should have a different emphasis or that it is too complicated to be thoroughly examined.

Requests \$7.9 Billion

The President's proposal for the Mutual Security Program includes: \$656 million for economic aid and technical assistance to underdeveloped countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America; \$5.3 billion for military aid, chiefly for Europe; and \$1.8 billion in defense support for Europe.

Few members of Congress feel competent to judge where cuts should be made in the military items of the Program. Neither do they want to take responsibility for reducing aid to Asia; they remember the contention that China was lost to communism because insufficient aid had been given. If Indo-China or India should fall into Russia's hands, no one wants to be held responsible.

"Defense Support" Attacked

Most cries for economy are directed toward so-called "defense support,"—a new term meaning the shipment of raw materials such as fuel, cotton, basic foodstuffs and machinery to nations in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization which do not have these items or the dollars to buy them from the United States.

Senator Byrd (D. Va.) would like to see both economic aid and defense support eliminated. Senator Connally (D. Tex.), chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, believes defense support is a mere camouflage for the continuation of the Marshall Plan which he says the Administration promised to end last year.

Many in Congress approve of allocating funds for technical assistance but without large scale economic aid. Senator Taft (R. Ohio) has said the technical assistance program for underdeveloped nations "in many ways has been the most useful thing we've done and at comparatively little expense."

Not all attacks are directed against the economic aspects of the Program. Believing that the Administration has pushed European rearmament too fast at the risk of jeopardizing the economic stability the E.C.A. labored so hard to build up, some people favor cutting the military part of the Program. Dollar for dollar, they argue, defense support is more desirable because it will foster increased production and feed Europe's industrial machine.

The "strings attached" critics favor the Mutual Security Program but with certain reservations. Senator Green (D. R.I.) wants to be sure benefits will go to all segments of the population in recipient countries, and not—as has been said of the Marshall Plan—benefit higher income people more than those with lower incomes. Supporters of European integration want aid to Europe conditional upon the recipient's joining the European Army and extending economic and political cooperation. Others want a more equitable tax burden in recipient countries. Still others wish the Program to further land reform in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

U.N. Minimized

United Nations supporters wish to see it play a greater role in that part of the Mutual Security Program devoted to underdeveloped countries. The Administration has stated many times that the U.N. is the foundation of our foreign policy. Yet, under the proposed Mutual Security Program, the U.S. would contribute only 2.5 per cent of its economic aid and technical assistance for underdeveloped areas through the U.N.

Representative Javits (R. N.Y.) suggests that the U.S. contribute \$100 million to a U.N. International Finance Corporation for low interest rate loans for special projects in Asia, Africa and Latin America. W. Averell Harriman, director of the Mutual Security Program, says he doesn't want this to come out of the Program's funds.

With so many critics expounding their views about the Mutual Security Program, Congress may find it difficult to decide what the extent and nature of U.S. aid to other nations should be. A very important factor will be whether or not the people "back home" make known their opinions. Congress should be shown that constituents do think the Mutual Security Program affects them.

Water Control to Date

REVISING national policies or adopting new ones is a long hard process. Current developments in federal water control policies are a case in point.

For many years several government agencies have shared responsibility in this field even though experts agree "one river presents one problem." Flood control, irrigation, power development and related water control activities in connection with a single river should be considered and planned for together.

Various changes in water policies and their administration have been suggested. Believers in Valley Authorities have been carrying on a campaign for years; the Hoover Commission in 1949 urged the merging of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation, the two leading federal agencies responsible for water control operations; the President's Water Resources Policy Commission in 1950 recommended the establishment of River Basin Commissions to coordinate federal water and land resources development work at regional levels.

Congressman Karsten (D. Mo.) recently introduced a bill which would set up in the office of the President a Board of Analysis for Water Development and Use to review all proposed Federal construction projects. The flood control and river and harbor improvements functions of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers would also be transferred to the Secretary of the Interior.

Meanwhile a Missouri Basin Survey Commission has been established by the President to study the resources of the Missouri River and to report within a year a program for producing maximum development of resources surrounding this great river.

It is nearly three years since the report of the Hoover Commission was issued. Congressional hearings, the first step in the lengthy legislative process of revising the existing administrative set-up, have yet to be held. This delay does not mean reorganization

Time for Action

HEARINGS on the Mutual Security Program began March 17 in the Senate Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees and in the House Foreign Affairs Committee. They will probably continue through the middle of April; then the legislation will be prepared for action in the Senate and House.

The position of the League of Women Voters on the Mutual Security Program is: 1) that the Point IV Program of technical assistance and economic aid to underdeveloped countries, which is just beginning to get under way, should be continued; 2) that the United States should make greater use of the United Nations in extending international economic development; 3) that the U.S. should cooperate with other NATO countries to strengthen the defenses of the North Atlantic community; 4) that the U.S. should work with Western European nations to build economic stability and to encourage genuine regional cooperation in this area; and 5) that, because there is great need for economy and efficiency in government, all requests for funds should be scrutinized carefully by Congress.

League members strongly support constructive measures to promote human welfare as being the only long-run answer to communist promises.

The Mutual Security Program is the most important piece of foreign policy legislation to come before Congress this year. Now is the time for citizens to tell their Congressmen what they think about it.

is dead; its proponents are determined to keep it alive.

One constructive step was taken on March 27 by the Jones subcommittee of the House Public Works Committee when it started public hearings on policies and procedures in connection with the authorization and construction of river and harbor and flood control projects.

★ CONGRESSIONAL SPOTLIGHT ★

D.C. Home Rule (S. 1976)*: Hearings are in progress before a House District Subcommittee. On March 18 Mrs. Robert F. Leonard, first vice president of the LWV of the U.S., testified in support of this bill.

Mutual Security Program: See above.

Reorganization Plan No. 1: On March 13 the Senate approved the President's plan to reorganize the Bureau of Internal Revenue by voting down a resolution to disapprove, 37 yeas to 53 nays.

Civil Works: See above.

Statehood for Alaska (S. 50): The Senate may reconsider its action of February 27, which by a vote of 45 yeas to 44 nays, sent the Alaska statehood bill back to Committee. Consideration has been postponed on a similar bill for Hawaii.

Japanese Peace Treaty: Ratification by the Senate took place on March 20 by a vote of 66 yeas to 10 nays. Included was a reservation barring recognition (1) of provisions favoring Russia in the Yalta Agreement regarding Japan, and (2) of Russian claims to territory held by Japan on December 7, 1941.

Housing (H.R. 7072): On March 21, by a vote of 192 yeas to 168 nays, the House adopted an amendment to the Independent Offices Appropriation bill which would limit new construction of public housing units to 5,000. The President's request had been for 75,000 units.

Defense Production Act (S. 2594): On March 26 the Senate Banking and Currency Committee announced its decision to recommend the extension of wage, price and credit controls for one year. Some of the controversial provisions acted on were: (1) agreement against placing slaughter quotas in the bill; (2) a change in the Herlong amendment to prevent manufacturers from adding increased excise taxes to retail prices; (3) tentative revision of Section 104 restricting imports of fats, oils and dairy products so that restrictions would be authorized by the President under specified conditions only.†

* Indicates League support.

† Indicates League opposition to Section 104.

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